

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 L-03 EB-07 DODE-00 CIAE-00

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R 291724Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3310

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL DURBAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 11651

E.O. 11652:X-GDS-L

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, OCLR, UK, SF

SUBJ: PROPOSED SAFAIR USE OF US LANDING FACILITIES

REF: STATE 177039

1. EMBASSY OFFICER MET ON JULY 29 WITH ROBERT CORMACK OF FCO DEFENSE DEPARTMENT AND ANTHONY FORD OF CENTRAL SOUTH AFRICA DEPARTMENT REGARDING SOUTH AFRICA'S CLEARANCE REQUEST FOR THREE SAFAIR FLIGHTS THROUGH ASCENSION ISLAND. ACCORDING TO FCO, THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY IN LONDON LAST YEAR REQUESTED A BLANKET CLEARANCE FROM THE UK FOR SIXTEEN SAFAIR ROUND-TRIP FLIGHTS TO FRANCE TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN JANUARY AND JULY 1975. EACH FLIGHT WOULD TOUCH AT ASCENSION BOTH COMING AND GOING. SAG EMBASSY FILED 12 SPECIFIC FLIGHT PLANS SPACED OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS, THREE IN FACT THIS MONTH, AND THE LAST OF WHICH WAS SCHEDULED FOR JULY 25-26.

2. FCO ASSUMES THAT EACH OF THESE FLIGHTS WENT OFF AS PLANNED AND NOT VIA AN ALTERNATE ROUTE, BUT WILL ATTEMPT TO CONFIRM.(SUGGEST WE DO THE SAME.)WITH THE ORIGINAL BLANKET CLEARANCE ABOUT TO EXPIRE, HOWEVER, FCO CONSIDERS THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM A DEAD ISSUE UNLESS THE SAG EMBASSY REQUESTS AN EXTENSION. CORMACK AND FORD FOUND PUZZLING

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THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SAG EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON. CORMACK'

BEST EXPLANATION WAS THAT SAG EMBASSY OFFICIALS MISTAKENLY TOOK ACTION ON AN INFORMATION COPY CABLE ADDRESSED TO LONDON.

3. FCO READILY AGREED THAT ANY FUTURE THIRD-PARTY REQUESTS FOR COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS THROUGH ASCENSION SHOULD BE COORDINATED WITH THE DEPARTMENT BEFORE RESPONSE, PARTICULARLY WHERE SOUTH AFRICA IS INVOLVED. WHEN EMBASSY OFFICER REFERRED TO ARTICLE XI, PARAGRAPH 3, OF THE 1956 AGREEMENT REQUIRING JOINT APPROVAL, CORMACK PRODUCED THE ORIGINAL ACCORD AND QUOTED THE REFERENCED PROVISION WHICH STATES THAT THIRD-PARTY CLEARANCE WILL BE GOVERNED BY PROCEDURES TO BE AGREED UPON BY US AND UK. WE ASSUME A SUBSEQUENT DOCUMENT LAYS OUT THE PROCEDURES AND ESTABLISHES THE REQUIREMENT FOR JOINT APPROVAL, BUT WOULD LIKE CONFIRMATION.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE (A) LEARNING HOW SOUTH AFRICANS FOLLOW-UP THEIR JUNE 24 REQUEST; (B) REFERENCE AND LANGUAGE GOVERNING US-UK AGREEMENT FOR THIRD-PARTY FLIGHTS THROUGH ASCENSION; AND (C) RESULTS OF INQUIRY TO ASCENSION WHETHER SAFAIR FLIGHTS HAVE TRANSITED THE FACILITY.

RICHARDSON

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